

## **Holmes Report Names Best Agencies to Work For**

### **Best Large Agency to Work For: Edelman**

There was a time, only a decade or so ago, when Edelman routinely finished among the bottom half of the big firms participating in our Best Agencies to Work For survey. But the firm's scores have been improving steadily, and over the past five years it has consistently ranked in the top five, as more and more employees come to perceive its independent status as an advantage and as it expands the various internal offerings it provides to employees.

On the professional development front, Edelman University has expanded to include a global curriculum; a week-long immersion in social media that examines both technologies and philosophies; a series of "On the Go" online learning modules; and—new this year—a Lessons in a Recession course, which offers a comprehensive approach to improving client services, understanding the financial issues clients are facing, dealing with the changing media landscape, and restoring trust in corporations and other institutions. The firm also has a Managers Bootcamp, providing lessons in coaching and empowering employees, providing effective feedback, diversity and inclusion, Edelman values and more, and Edelman Leadership Academy, a four-day program for more than 60 VP level executives from around the network, focused on strengthening leadership capabilities.

The firm's Living in Color initiative, launched five years ago, is designed to encourage employees to immerse themselves in the arts, culture, politics, literature, and charitable organizations, and every year Edelman offices provide pro bono support to a range of local and national organizations. The firm also participates in a number of community events. In fall of 2008, for example, the firm took part in the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer 3-Day Walk in Atlanta. Each of its 13 U.S offices was represented on a team that raised more than \$77,000 and was the fifth largest fundraiser at the event.

Edelman also offers a first-rate intranet, Fusion, designed as a cross between Facebook, Google, and YouTube. Employees can "opt-in" to receive information that is relevant to them, access an archive of Edelman University training content, and see video messages from senior executives. Another neat benefit: employees in good standing who would like time to pursue a dream or goal may apply to receive an Edelman Escape, and a panel of judges chooses a few employees each year to reward with the Escape program of up to \$1,000 and one week's paid time off to pursue their dream or goal.

Edelman is "at heart a family business with the advantages of a large corporation," says one survey respondent. "The emphasis Edelman puts on its staff being fully rounded individuals who give back to the community and take time for family is wonderful. I am very grateful for the reward initiatives Edelman has offered over the years, especially for the Edelman Escape program, where I was awarded an additional week of paid vacation and \$1,000 so I could take my father fishing and spend precious time with him before he passed away last year."

The Holmes Report

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